



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**



**POLICY NUMBER**

**ADM: 13**

**EFFECTIVE  
DATE:  
04/29/2010**

**ORIGINAL  
ISSUED ON:  
04/10/1991**

**SUBJECT: CARRYING OF FIREARMS**

**REVISION NO:**

**8**

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for the carrying of firearms by commissioned personnel and to describe prohibitions for non-commissioned personnel.

## **2.0 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to equip and train its commissioned personnel with compatible weapons systems that will assist them in safely and effectively performing their duties as well as enhancing officer safety.

## **3.0 APPLICABILITY**

This policy shall apply to all commissioned personnel of the Department of Public Safety. The section entitled "Firearms in Department Facilities" applies to all non-commissioned DPS employees.

## **4.0 REFERENCES**

**A. CALEA Chapter 1 – Law Enforcement Role and Authority**

**B. HR 218; The Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004**

**C. New Mexico Department of Public Safety Firearms Training Manual; 2010 Edition**

**D. Section 30-7-2 NMSA 1978**

## **5.0 DEFINITIONS**

**NONE**

## **6.0 PROCEDURE**

### **A. Carrying of Deadly Weapons**

1. Officers/Agents are authorized to carry and use deadly weapons in the performance of their duties pursuant to State Law (30-7-2 NMSA 1978) and Department policy.
2. Officers/Agents shall carry their department issued weapon/sidearm as their primary duty weapon while on duty. A back-up weapon/sidearm issued or approved by the Chief may be carried as a back-up weapon at the officer's discretion. Officers/Agents may, at their discretion, carry their department issued primary duty weapon while off duty.
3. Officers/Agents may carry a department issued/approved back-up weapon at their discretion while off duty if the requirements for an off-duty weapon have been met.

4. Officers/Agents will have in their possession their badges and commission if they are carrying a concealed departmental issued/approved weapon/sidearm while off duty.
5. DPS commissioned officers/agents may carry a department issued sidearm in a concealed manner while in another state as long as they have their commission and badge in possession. Federal Law, *HR 218: The Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004*, permits and allows for law enforcement officers to carry their firearm between states in a concealed manner. The laws and regulations of that state and all regulations as outlined in this policy must be followed if an officer/agent chooses to carry a concealed weapon .
6. Department issued/approved firearms will **NOT** be carried in the following circumstances:
  - a. While consuming alcohol off-duty or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - b. While on suspension or otherwise relieved of regular duties.

Clarification added.

### B. Authorized Deadly Weapons

1. Duty Weapons – Department issued firearms that are carried on duty.
  - a. Duty sidearm: Department issued sidearm; make and model approved by the New Mexico State Police Chief.
  - b. Duty rifle: Department issued rifle; make and model approved by the New Mexico State Police Chief.
  - c. Duty shotgun (OPTIONAL): Department issued shotgun; make and model approved by the New Mexico State Police Chief.
  - d. Speciality Team Weapon(s); As approved by the New Mexico State Police Chief.

NOTE: For specific makes and models of current duty weapons, refer to *OPR: 01 Use of Force*, Attachment B “NMSP Authorized Lethal and Less-Lethal Weapons and Munitions List.”

2. Back-up Weapon/Sidearm – A department issued or approved personal weapon/sidearm that may be carried in addition to the primary duty weapon/sidearm. Back-up weapons/side arms are to be carried in a concealed manner and placed in a position to be utilized as a secondary weapon/sidearm in an emergency situation. The back-up weapon/sidearm may be carried as an off-duty weapon in a concealed fashion, provided the officer/agent has met all other departmental requirements.
3. Off-Duty Weapon/Sidearm – A department issued or approved personal weapon/sidearm that may be carried off-duty at the discretion of the officer/agent. This weapon/sidearm will be carried in a concealed manner. The officer/agent will have in their possession their badges and commission while carrying a concealed weapon/sidearm off duty.

### C. Weapons Security

All department weapons, when not secured on the officer's person or other department approved locking storage device, such as the issued AR-15 holder or the locked trunk of

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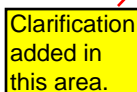
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an issued unit, shall be secured and/or stored in a safe manner. All department weapons shall be inaccessible to children or unauthorized personnel at all times.

### D. Specific Requirements

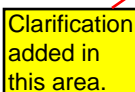
1. Commissioned employees shall have all issued and approved firearms at their immediate disposal while on duty. The approved primary duty sidearm will be worn on their person, except in those circumstances noted above.
2. All weapons will be loaded with only authorized duty ammo while on or off duty, except during practice or training, as follows:
  - a. The duty sidearm will be fully loaded;
  - b. The issued long guns will be half loaded until needed for deployment;
  - c. Ball ammunition is **ONLY** authorized for qualifications and training.
3. All weapons, including back-up weapons, will be properly maintained and available for inspection at all times.
4. Unauthorized alterations or modifications will **NOT** be made to any weapon used or intended for official use, unless authorized by the department armorer.
5. On duty plain-clothes commissioned personnel may carry their weapon/sidearm while in public view as long as the badge of office is displayed and the individual is dressed in a professional manner.
6. Undercover certified agents may carry weapons during undercover operations at their own discretion.
7. Undercover certified agents may carry the Department issued back-up weapon as a primary duty weapon during undercover operations **ONLY**. This will be allowed if:
  - a. Written notification is made to the Department Armorer through the agents respective Investigations Bureau Zone Commander.
  - b. All three (3) phases of the firearms qualifications are successfully completed. The scores will be forwarded to the Department Armorer through the respective agents Investigations Bureau Zone Commander.
  - c. The Department Armorer will grant authorization, in writing, to the requesting agent through the agents chain of command.
8. The primary duty weapon must be worn during raids or tactical operations.
9. Carrying of additional weapons by members of specialty teams shall be governed by established team policy and approved by the Chief. Tactical Team members will carry the department issued sidearm, as both their primary duty weapon/sidearm and Tactical Team weapon/sidearm.
10. As a back-up weapon, an officer/agent may carry a sidearm that has been issued by the department or a personal sidearm approved by the Chief. (Approved caliber/s are .22, .25, .32, .380, .38, 9mm, 10mm, 40, .357, or 45).

Clarification  
added in  
this area.



11. The officer/agent will be required to qualify with the back-up or off-duty weapon initially when requesting departmental approval and thereafter at each firearms qualification using an approved standard course of fire.
12. The officer/agent will be required to use only department authorized factory ammunition. The department armorer shall maintain a list of all authorized ammunition and make the list available to all commissioned officers/agents. If the officer/agent chooses to carry a personal back-up weapon, the officer/agent will be responsible for their ammunition. That ammunition must be on the armorer's approved list of authorized ammunition.
13. Commissioned personnel who choose to carry department issued firearms while off duty must do so in a concealed and safe manner.
14. As an off-duty weapon, an officer/agent may carry a department issued sidearm or a personal sidearm approved by the Chief. The minimum acceptable caliber for an off-duty weapon will be .38 Special or 9mm.
15. Commissioned employees traveling on commercial airlines must meet the following requirements prior to carrying their department sidearm on the aircraft:
  - a. Obtain authorization from the Office of the Chief or his/her designee and the airline and/or airline captain;
  - b. Employees must comply with FAA regulations.

Clarification  
added in  
this area.



### **E. District Range Master Responsibilities**

1. Will ensure that all weapons are checked for safety and serviceability prior to qualification. If a weapon is found to be unsafe, in disrepair or unserviceable, the district range master will immediately notify the officer/agent's chain of command and the department's armorer for appropriate disposition. The officer/agent will then be issued the district's spare weapon.
2. Will conduct practical training and/or review weapons malfunctions, use of deadly force policy issues, and manipulation drills during all phases of qualifications.
3. Will review range rules prior to all qualifications and have officer/agent sign copy of range rules during Phase I. District range master will maintain all signed range rules.
4. Will conduct all phases of qualifications as prescribed in the range masters manual and will ensure that all officers within their district/bureau complete all firearms qualifications phases as required by this policy.
5. Will ensure all target scoring is done as prescribed in the range master's manual.
6. Will ensure all scoring is forwarded to the District/Bureau Commander or Director and the training section.

### **F. Headquarters Armorer Responsibilities**

1. Inventory of all department owned weapons prior to issuing them to authorized personnel.

2. Care, maintenance, service and issuance of department weapons.
3. Maintenance of a record/database of each weapon approved by the department for duty use.
4. Storage and maintenance of qualification scores.
5. Storage, maintenance, and issuance of department ammunition.
6. Yearly reporting of commissioned officers' firearms qualification scores to the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy.

### G. Qualification

1. Recruit officers will be required to qualify two consecutive times with a minimum score of eighty (80) percent with all department weapons on all applicable courses of fire, prior to completion of the firearms portion of the academy training.
2. Firearms qualifications will be conducted three times a year for all commissioned personnel. Only those agency personnel demonstrating proficiency in the use of agency-authorized weapons will be approved to carry such weapons. Proficiency training must be monitored by a certified weapons instructor (range master).
3. All training and proficiency shall be documented. Documentation for training outside of qualifications shall be maintained in a district file. Documentation for qualification must be forwarded to the Department Armorer as specified in the Department Range Master Manual.
4. The officer/agent must qualify with all issued and approved weapons three times a year. Officers shall qualify and train with their weapons from the manner in which they are carried while on duty. All officers will utilize the issued or authorized hip holster that is used on a daily basis
5. At least one of these qualifications will be a night or low-light qualification.
6. If the officer/agent has an authorized back-up sidearm, he/she will be required to qualify with the back-up and/or off-duty sidearm during all three qualifications.
7. All personnel will wear the authorized BDU uniform while participating in training at the range. The only exceptions will be training conducted specifically for specialty teams. Team members are allowed to wear authorized team uniforms for these activities.
8. The Range Masters Manual will describe the courses of fire, explaining the steps for each course, and identifying the periods of the three qualification phases. The manual will be developed and maintained by the Department Armorer on an annual basis.

Clarification added.

### H. Failure To Qualify

1. If, after two attempts, an officer/agent fails to qualify by not achieving at least a minimum score of eighty percent (80%) on any department issued weapon, the range master will:

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- a. Immediately notify the officer's/agent's Commander and the Office of the Chief. The Commander will immediately reassign the officer/agent to "administrative duties."
- b. Schedule remedial firearms training with the Department Armorer to take place within three (3) working days. An officer/agent placed on "administrative duties" will not be allowed to perform their regular duties until they have passed the remedial firearms training. The department issued marked unit and firearms will be secured by the District/Bureau Commander until the officer/agent returns to regular duties.

Clarification added.

### 2. Procedure for Remedial Training:

- a. A two to eight hour course of firearms remedial training will be provided by the Department Armorer or selected range master in the District requesting remedial training.
- b. The officer/agent must complete two consecutive minimum scores of eighty percent (80%) on the failed course. The officer/agent will then be returned to their prior active duty status.
- c. Should the officer/agent fail to qualify after the remedial firearms training, the Department Armorer will notify the District/Bureau Commander or Director, who will then notify the Office of the Chief.
- d. The Department Armorer or their designee will schedule remedial firearms training to take place within three (3) working days from the date the officer/agent failed their first remedial firearms training. Should the officer/agent qualify at least two consecutive times with a minimum score of eighty percent (80%) on the failed course, the officer/agent will be returned to their prior active duty status.
- e. Should the officer/agent fail to achieve at least a minimum score in the remedial firearms training, action will be taken by the Chief, which could include dismissal.
  1. Repeated failure to achieve a minimum passing score in any subsequent qualification phase may compel the Chief to take action, which may include dismissal.
  2. After returning to duty from authorized extended leave, an officer/agent must make up missed annual qualifications within thirty (30) days.

### I. Procedure for, Review, Inspection and Approval of Department-Approved Weapons

1. The Department Armorer is responsible for the review, inspection, and approval of Department owned weapons prior to them being issued to field employees.
2. Officers/Agents requesting authorization to carry a personally owned firearm must have the weapon reviewed and inspected for serviceability by the Department Armorer. Once approved by the Department Armorer, the Officer/Agent must request permission to carry the weapon on duty, in writing, from the Chief, or his/her designee.

Clarification added.



3. The officer/agent may only begin carrying the weapon for duty use after he/she has received written authorization from the Chief or his/her designee.
4. Once approved for carrying purposes, the officer/agent shall, within three (3) days of receiving written authorization, provide the make, model, serial number, and caliber to the Department Armorer for purposes of updating the weapons database.

### **J. Procedure for Removal of Unsafe Weapon**

1. Prior to conducting any weapons qualification, the instructor shall inspect all weapons for serviceability. Personnel will also inspect their issue weapons for any obvious problems and serviceability.
2. Should a weapon be found to be unsafe, the officer/agent/instructor shall immediately remove the weapon from service.
3. The employee shall contact the District/Bureau Commander or Director in order to have the district/bureau spare weapon issued on a temporary basis.
4. The Department Armorer shall be contacted as soon as practical to arrange for a replacement weapon.
5. The Department Armorer shall replace/repair the unsafe weapon and update the weapons database, as appropriate.

### **K. Procedure for Record Keeping**

1. The Department Armorer shall maintain a record of each weapon approved by the department for official use.
2. The Department Armorer shall maintain a database listing all department-issued firearms, including model and serial numbers and, to whom the firearm is issued.
3. In the event a weapon is discovered to be unsafe, it shall be replaced according to the procedure described above. The newly issued replacement shall be entered into the database for inventory/tracking purposes.

### **L. Firearms in Department Facilities**

1. Non-commissioned DPS employees, DPS contractors, and visitors are strictly prohibited from possessing a firearm inside any department-owned or leased building, even though they may possess a valid New Mexico Concealed Carry License.
2. Non-commissioned Law Enforcement Academy firearms instructors or cadets attending the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy or the State Police Academy may possess firearms inside department buildings while conducting or participating in firearms training.
3. Non-DPS commissioned officers visiting a DPS facility on official business or attending training are permitted to carry firearms, consistent with this policy.

## **7.0 ATTACHMENTS**

**NONE**

**8.0 APPROVAL**

APPROVED BY: s/John Denko  
DPS Cabinet Secretary

DATE: 04/29/2010